

*Include in list of
Giving*

		RBF

11/13/34

Memorandum to Mr. Fosdick re the MS

Scope of MS

Practically speaking the time and interests of the Director of the MS are spent about half in the RF and about half divided between the GEB and the CMS. Thus at the outset it might be said that there is a considerable demand on the time of the MS officers (since Dr. Lambert is working also on GEB program) on other than RF work.

Broadly speaking the activities of the division are selection and administration of fellowships, selection of recipients for grants in aid, study and preparation of general program and of the larger projects. This work is done partly at the office in New York and partly through travel and visits to institutions and individuals. As a general impression I would be inclined to think that the amount of time for the preparation of plans and for study of the field is too small, being in considerable measure stolen away by claims of old programs and a necessity for being reasonably polite and considerate of the interests of correspondents and visitors at the office.

A major and a minor program are now connected with the Medical Sciences, the major in psychiatry, the minor in the field of the teaching of public health to medical students. Relatively little has been done in this second field and it requires preliminary study and planning to a considerable degree before it is wise to launch much in the way of an active program. In psychiatry the order of procedure has been attendance first to the recruitment of personnel through a fellowship program. This is reasonably well under way in the U.S. and will be extended as occasion permits and as experience directs us to other countries.

During the current year several appropriations have been made to strengthen the most promising university teaching centers. This has been done on a 3-5 year basis but strengthening must become more permanent in order to be definitely effective.

Grants in aid program in psychiatry is small in the absence of thoroughly competent investigators but would naturally become more important an item as better trained personnel appears.

In my mind we have some extraordinary possibilities still to be developed notably in connection with the more effective teaching of psychiatry in the State insane asylums to the medical personnel of the asylum systems, in the development of superior psychiatric nursing ~~superintendents~~, and in the liaison between competent psychiatrists and men training for the professions of teacher, minister and lawyer. It is probable also that the almost invaluable aide of the psychiatrist, now known as the psychiatric social worker, is a field in which training can be made more effective.

I should feel it a sound and sensible criticism that inadequate attention thus far had been given to psychology, and it would also be my hope that within the next two years some definite steps can be taken towards improving the status of psychiatry as related to the general subject of criminology and legal medicine.

In general the proper order of events I should conceive to be the finding and training of personnel, sifting out of good workers through experience obtained by grants in aid and with the combined knowledge that this gives, eventually the formulation of plans involving larger sums of money and the proper organization and financing of permanent institutions.

Methods

Ideally the best procedure for Foundation officers is to have ample time to read, to discuss, to visit, and thus study the possibilities in a given field of interest, this to be followed by further familiarity obtained through minor projects directly or indirectly supported, and at a later time either upon our own initiative or ^{on} a justified request, prepare a project that will have some appreciable and permanent influence in developing the subject. My criteria are: (1) the undisputed quality of a man or a man with competent assistants, (2) a workable idea, (3) favorable circumstances and likelihood of permanence, and (4) that the whole project be something which the RF can do peculiarly well and which is not just as easily done by a legislature or a group of private citizens or a single donor. In some circumstances I should place the idea first in importance but in this outline I put the man of first importance since I think it is important ~~and~~ realize that though RF officers may have ideas, it is really more important for them to find men who have ideas since without an active and responsible agent even our own ideas will betray us. Furthermore it is wise in my opinion to follow Rose's procedure of giving the credit to the other man.

Tempo

I should like to point out that the termination of old program takes a great deal of time - it not only takes time before 4 or 5 or 10 year programs run out but it takes a great deal of time to talk with the recipients and arrange for a conference and to have considered the treatment of the usual hopes that there will be a renewal or extension. In January, 1931, the Director of the MS was responsible for 116 going projects. It is futile to assume that such commitments as the RF has entered into can be ruthlessly eliminated without seriously qualifying the good name of the Foundation. This is one reason why tempo must be slow. Another and very cogent reason is that we are in a position different from the first officers of the Foundation in that their earlier years were not marked by the visits and letters of a public well informed as to the nature of their probable interests. They consequently had time to study and inclination to discuss workable programs and this time to study included time to travel and develop a scheme of procedure which was reasonably orderly and consistent. This time is hard for their successors to find and consequently new plans come on but slowly.

A third reason for having a slow and deliberate tempo is that permanent

effects cannot be expected in several subjects, notably psychiatry, since personnel not only has to be found - it has to be lost, i. e. some men must leave certain posts before change can be expected in way of development.

There is no likelihood of any definite effect being obtained in a hurry in many of the scientific fields today. Familiarity, confidence, tenacity of purpose, all require time, and sometimes the subject of investigation itself, e. g. eugenics, requires the passage of time for its raw material to be gathered.

Tendencies

My experience indicates that programs in the RF tend to get small, scrappy, numerous and diffuse, to get into what Mrs. Wharton aptly calls the "thick of thin things." I could believe it wise for us to work longer on fewer subjects better selected and costing more, and eventually meaning more. There is a steady temptation to go in for small financing for short periods of time of projects which in the end are ephemeral and trivial. Not much of a case has to be made for a \$2000 item and what is more ~~\$22,000~~ ^{twenty} items will take so much time that there is not time to find the shoddy and unsubstantial in them. I should feel it extremely wise for the Trustees to make an effort as early as possible to remove an effect which is pushing all of the officers towards numerous scrappy inconsequential undertakings, namely the limiting of obligations to one year which so far as we understand has not yet been removed frankly and fully.

I would also like to point out again a tendency against which it seems wise to make a steady effort, namely the provincial outlook in contrast to a wide familiarity to officers of conditions throughout the world. Of the six officers, including the president, the following I believe is true: Four have never been in South America, four have never been in the Orient, six have never been in Australia, South Africa, India, and four have never lived outside the United States for more than a year. This I believe has sequelae which must be guarded against and a definite effort should be made to see that at every meeting there is a criticism made if the program offered for trustee consideration has not a certain geographic balance.

I would give it as my personal impression that the tendency towards too rigid an interpretation of research and concentrated programs has already been realized. I believe that in the long run research can be aided better through some attention to teaching facilities than through ad hoc Simon pure research grants. One might as well insist that the tree has nothing to do with the fruit as to say that assistance to the stability and healthiness of education has nothing to do with the quality of ~~new truth acquired~~ ^{research}.

Furthermore the wisest and most effective ^{sudden} support is given when there is no hurry, no over-reaching, no pressure for steady results, but a steady ^{and} and intimate familiarity that enables plans to be matured at the right time.

It might be useful for the trustees to indicate that they expected definite warning from the officers when in the officers' opinion the threshold of diminishing returns is reached in any given program since I believe such a threshold can be reached, and I would point out that in both the field

of psychiatry and public health it is not research alone which will leave a permanent stamp but general husbanding, stimulation, protection, and support which will make the permanent difference which I understand to be our best objective.

In the way of practical suggestions I should say that the fellowships should have more time spent on selection and less on administration; that they should be in larger measure related to program, that grants in aid should either be decentralized to the NRC or similar body or show a somewhat larger connection with program, that larger projects be put on the calendar of possibilities as early as is financially wise and that where adequate case can be made, staff appointments be slightly increased in number.